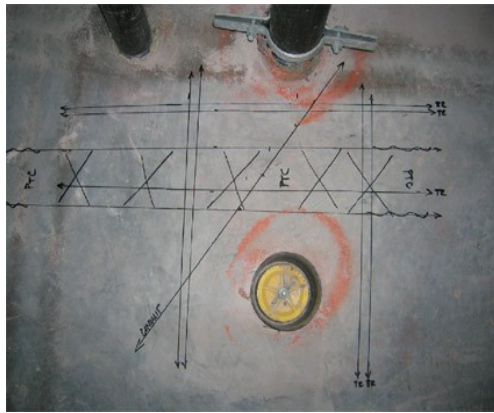


# Installation Expertise with Tim McAdoo

## Concrete Subfloor Contamination

There seems to be an epidemic of construction markings on concrete floors bleeding up through commercial vinyl flooring. These markings can be from construction contractors writing on concrete with permanent markers, grease pencils, or spray paint to mark the concrete and then bleed up through the vinyl flooring. Spray paints, permanent markers like a Sharpie and other ink markers should not be used to mark the concrete slab (shown below) as they probably will bleed through to the surface of the flooring, permanently discoloring the vinyl flooring...and not be covered by warranty.



Listed below are some contaminants that may cause discoloration of commercial vinyl flooring.

- Oil and grease from construction trades
- Plumbers Primer
- Lumber crayon, grease pencils, or permanent marker often used to mark concrete slabs
- Spray paint for marking concrete.

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Most of these contaminants contain a petroleum ingredient, which is the potential staining agent. Even if they are mechanically removed or not visible before the vinyl flooring is installed, there may be enough residual contaminate absorbed into the concrete substrate to cause discoloration of the vinyl flooring.

I researched several large commercial vinyl flooring manufacturers on how they address subfloor contamination. All manufacturers addressed that; **The substrate must be free of moisture, dust, sealers, paint, curing compounds, parting agents, residual adhesives, adhesive removers, hardeners, resinous compounds, solvents, wax, oil, grease, asphalt, gypsum compounds, alkaline salts, excessive carbonation or laitance, mold, mildew, any other extraneous coatings, films, materials and all other foreign matter.**

Where it differed was that several manufacturers addressed these contaminants as bond breakers only (causing adhesion problems) and did not address the fact that these products could lead to potential staining issues with their flooring products. However, in their warranty information any subfloor discoloration is not covered by their warranty.

Other manufacturers addressed these subfloor contaminants as the ability to stain and telegraph through the backing of flooring as noted; **Contamination on the substrate can cause damage to the resilient flooring material. Permanent and nonpermanent markers, pens, crayons, paint, etc., must not be used to write on the back of the flooring material or used to mark the substrate as they could bleed through and stain the flooring material. If these contaminants are present on the substrate they must be mechanically removed prior to the installation of the flooring material.**

Many installers think covering the subfloor markings with a cementitious patching compound will stop the contamination bleed through. Patching compounds are porous materials and will allow the subfloor markings to bleed up through them as well, and stain the vinyl flooring products. In general, the marking contaminants must be mechanically removed. But, please note; Even if they are removed or not visible before the flooring is installed, there may be enough residual material absorbed into the substrate to cause discoloration of the vinyl flooring.

There is one product on the market that I know of, TriSeal from XL Brands that feels very confident that TriSeal will block these stains from migrating upward and staining the vinyl flooring. [http://www.xlbrands.com/techdata/TDS\\_Triseal.pdf](http://www.xlbrands.com/techdata/TDS_Triseal.pdf)

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**Triseal** is a light-colored, high-strength acrylic polymer compound. **Triseal is applied** with a 3/8" nap paint roller, as an even coat over the entire surface of the floor. Make certain to keep the application roller wet with material. Only one coat is required at an application rate of 315–360 square feet per gallon. Allow **Triseal** to dry for a minimum of 4 hours, or until completely dry and hardened to the touch. For more information on TriSeal, please contact XL Brands at 1-800-367-4583.

## About Tim McAdoo:

Tim is a certified instructor for Armstrong/Bruce, Avaire, Konecto and Starloc products and has been a member of the Armstrong Installation Training Team since 1984. Tim has highly developed installation skills and qualifications that have been combined over his 32 years in the floor covering industry. Tim is privy to all the latest innovations and techniques used in the installation of their products.

We are sure you will find your skills improved after attending one of his installation courses.




To view a complete list and register for one of Tim's installation trainings, click here on the QR or visit: <http://www.jjhaines.com/customers/installation-training/>



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